

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 9 remain in this application. Claims 1, 3 - 4, 6 - 7, and 9 have been amended.

Claims 1 - 9 were rejected as being indefinite under Section 112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Particularly, claims 1, 3 - 4, 6 - 7, and 9 have been amended to make the claims definite and/or to correct lack of antecedent bases.

Claim 1 has been extensively amended to correct the lack of antecedent basis for some of the claim terms and the indefiniteness of other claim terms. Of specific note, the phrase "preferably also prior to the widening operation" has been deleted. This phrase was merely exemplary and not a required feature of the claim. Claim 1 has also been amended to improve the syntax of the claim. Applicant submits that the amendments to claim 1 address all of the comments and concerns of the examiner with respect to claim 1.

Claim 3 has also been extensively amended to correct the lack of antecedent basis for some of the claim terms and the indefiniteness of other claim terms. Of specific note, the phrase "typically to a pulper located underneath" has been deleted to eliminate the indefiniteness this phrase might impart to the claim. This phrase was merely exemplary and not a required feature of the claim. Claim 3 has also been amended to improve the syntax of the claim. Applicant submits that the amendments to claim 3 address all of the comments and concerns of the examiner with respect to claim 3.

In claim 4, "a compressed air nozzle" has been amended to read --a first compressed air nozzle-- to provide antecedent basis for "the first nozzle" in claim 5 (which depends from claim 4). "The first nozzle" in claim 5 refers to the first compressed air nozzle introduced in claim 4, and claim 5 adds the limitation that a second compressed air nozzle is set at an angle of 55 - 85 degrees in the web travel direction after the first compressed air nozzle.

In claims 6 and 7, the term "the opening gap" has been amended to read --an opening gap of the selected dryer-- to correct the lack of antecedent basis for the term "the opening gap."

In claim 9, "the straight section of the web" has been amended to read --a straight section of the web-- to correct the lack of antecedent basis for "the straight section of the web."

Based upon the foregoing, applicant submits that claims 1 - 9 are now definite, and applicant therefore requests that the Section 112, second paragraph rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1 - 3 and 6 - 9 were rejected under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by Sollinger et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,600,897, hereinafter "Sollinger"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. The present invention focuses mainly on the problem that exists in the widening operation involving the tail, i.e., the operation of widening the tail into a full-width web. During tail threading, a web is divided into a tail portion and a broke web portion. The edges of the tail portion and the broke web portion along the cut are known to catch on each other, and it is also known that these edges sometimes drift on top of each other. This can cause numerous problems, including the following of the broke web portion into the section being threaded with the tail and the tearing of the tail during the widening operation. Contrarily, in the present invention, the edge B' of the broke web B is turned upwards and away from the web, creating an open draw between the tail and the broke web. The broke web therefore cannot tear a break in the outspreading tail (see Figs. 2 & 4 and p. 11, lines 18 - 26). The two portions of the web are separated and hence cannot interfere with one another. None of the cited references, including Sollinger, present this problem or the solution taught in the present invention.

Sollinger presents an air-blowing according to the prior art (single/double-felt dryers). The air-blowing in Sollinger does not open a draw between the tail and the broke web, but instead guides the tail forward and the broke web to the cellar. The cited blow 76 of Sollinger guides the broke-web to the cellar and the device 79 blows the tail to the suction roll. The blowings 77, 78 at an unsupported web blow the tail forward. Further,

Sollinger fails to teach or suggest a system in connection with the cutting device, in which the draw is opened by an inclined blow, which does not bring either of the parts forward and does not cut them. Sollinger does not teach or suggest a turning of the edge of the broke web upwards as in the present invention. For these reasons, applicant submits that claims 1 - 3 and 6 - 9 are patentable over Sollinger and respectfully requests that the Section 102(b) rejection of these claims over Sollinger be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sollinger in view of Caspar (U.S. Patent No. 6,001,219) and Beisswanger et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0053414, hereinafter "Beisswanger"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Caspar relates to edge trimming and not tail threading and is therefore not relevant to the problem addressed in the present invention. Further, Beisswanger is relevant in so much as the broke web is, indeed, separated using air-blowing. In Beisswanger, however, the broke web is blown directly to a cellar. Beisswanger fails to teach or suggest a system in connection with the cutting device, in which the edge of the broke web is turned up, as found in the present invention. Moreover, claims 4 and 5, depending from an allowable base claim (see above), are also themselves allowable. For these reasons, applicant submits that claims 4 and 5 are patentable over Sollinger in view of Caspar and Beisswanger. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 4 and 5 over Sollinger in view of Caspar and Beisswanger be withdrawn.

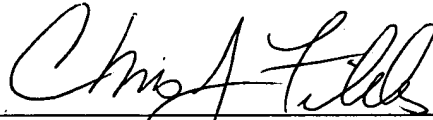
This amendment and request for reconsideration is felt to be fully responsive to the comments and suggestions of the examiner and to present the claims in condition for allowance. Favorable action is requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris J. Fildes", written in black ink.

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